

An Examination of Some Effects
of the
Marital Enrichment Group

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	iii
List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Abstract	vii
Chapter One	
Introduction	1
Chapter Two	
Method	18
Chapter Three	
Results	41
Chapter Four	
Discussion	56
Appendix A	72
Appendix B	84
Appendix C	86
Appendix D	89
Appendix E	91
Bibliography	92
Biographical Sketch	96

LIST OF TABLES

Table One	
Summary of the Analysis of Variance: Marital Roles Scale	46
Table Two	
Summary of T Test Analyses of Mean Change Scores on Marital Roles Scale	47
Table Three	
Mean Reported Deviation From "No Change" on Group Experience Evaluation	49
Table Four	
Summary of the Factorial Analysis of the Marital Roles Scale	54

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure One	
Change on Marital Communication Scale for Experimental and Control Group	42
Figure Two	
Mean Change on Marital Roles Scale	46
Figure Three	
Personality Trait List - Positive Adjectives E Group Only	53
Figure Four	
Personality Trait List - Negative Adjectives E Group Only	53

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This study is an investigation of some effects of the Marital Enrichment Group upon married couples who participate in it. The MEG involves married couples in a variety of communication exercises which are designed to help them focus on the positive qualities of their relationship, to increase their awareness of feelings and sensitivity to their marriage, and to improve the communication patterns between them.

Twenty-six married couples, 13 in the experimental group and 13 in the control group, participated in this study. The experimental group couples were tested prior to and following participation in the MEG, while control couples were tested twice without participation in the MEG. In addition, experimental couples were tested two months following group participation to study more long-term

results. Test instruments used were the Marital Communication Scale, the Marital Roles Scale, the Personality Trait List, Interaction Testing, and the Group Experience Evaluation.

Results from this study suggest that participation in the MEG increases non-verbal communication skills, causes one's view of self, spouse and marriage to be more positive, and increases the effectiveness of interaction patterns between spouses. The follow-up testing suggests that attitude change may show less decay effect than behavior change brought about through participation in the MEG.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has developed a growing concern for redirecting the focus of psychology from a problem-oriented, negativistic emphasis on psychopathology which posits "adjustment" as the ultimate goal of therapeutic intervention to a new awareness of man's strong positive potential for growth and self-actualization. This "growth" orientation has evolved concurrently with the development of "preventive" psychiatry and psychology. The preventive approach focuses on strengthening health engendering forces on both a social and individual level in an attempt to prevent the development of potential mental health problems.

The Marital Enrichment Group (MEG), developed by Carl Clarke¹, is an outgrowth of the emphases of both of these movements in psychology: an awareness of the positive human potential for growth, as well as the belief in the value of a preventive approach in mental health. This group experience, which will be described in detail later, aims specifically toward increasing sensitivity to and communication

1 More information concerning the MEG can be obtained by writing Dr. Carl Clarke, Marriage and College Life Project, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

of positive feelings between marriage partners. As such, the MEG represents a unique and very hopeful technique for developing the potential strengths in the marital relationship, with the aim of utilizing these strengths in coping with what could become future crises within the marriage, as well as increasing the potential of marriage as a very positive, rewarding and fulfilling relationship. The MEG has been designed primarily for couples whose marriages are not in serious conflict. The group procedures involve couples in a variety of communication activities which are designed to help them to focus on positive qualities of their relationship, to increase their awareness of feelings and sensitivity to their marriage, and to improve the communication patterns between them.

This study was designed as a preliminary evaluation of some of the effects which this "growth group" experience has upon the married couples who participate in it. As was mentioned above, the focus of the MEG is upon increasing awareness of and communication about what is positive and strong within the marriage. In this process, participants are bombarded with positive feedback over a six-week period. This flood of support and encouragement, the focus on increased awareness of feelings, and the exercises aimed toward developing new communication patterns, it was predicted, would lead to: 1) more open, more sensitive communication between partners, 2) greater understanding between partners, 3) a higher regard for the self, the

spouse, and the marital relationship, and 4) more productive, effective patterns of interaction between spouses.

Background of Related Theory and Research

Very little work has been done in the area of preventive approaches to marital problems, or in "growth groups" for married couples. It is the purpose of this section to briefly describe the more traditional approaches to the study of marriage, to discuss the "growth group" phenomenon, and to show how each of these related to Clarke's Marital Enrichment Group and the present study.

Positive Aspects of Marriage: Clinical Approaches

The more conventional approaches in working with married couples have traditionally stressed working with conflicts and disharmonies in the relationship. The classically psychoanalytic approach to marital discord in individual psychotherapy, as well as some of the more recent offshoots such as collaborative therapy and concurrent therapy, in which both partners are treated, all characteristically look at the neuroses of each partner and the adaptation of each to the other's pathology (Giovacchini, P. L., 1965; Martin, P. A., 1965). In marriage counseling the focus is somewhat different, with emphasis on feelings, attitudes and expectations rather than on intrapsychic conflicts (Mudd, E. H. and Goodwin, H. M., 1965); however, marriage counseling tends to remain basically problem-directed.

Some of the more recent efforts at working with married

couples in groups come much closer to emphasizing the more positive and productive factors in marriage. In group therapy with married couples there is more emphasis on the interaction between partners rather than on the individual. The focus tends to be on present, on-going experience. In the supportive climate of acceptance within the group, freer and less defensive communication between partners, and more accurate reality testing is facilitated (Boyer, C. L., 1960). While still problem-oriented, there is also the emphasis upon learning better patterns of communication and interaction with the spouse.

One group experience for married couples which diverges from the traditional problem orientation is the classroom experience developed by Buchanan (1961). This group experience was developed as a college level course on marriage. It differs from other courses on marriage in that all participants are married and the spouses of class members attend as well. While some didactic material is included, the great majority of time is spent in spontaneous group interaction and discussion of topics pertinent to marriage. Particular emphasis is given to topics where communication appears to be lacking between husband and wife. Sessions are spent concerning differences between the male and female point of view, adjustment to marriage, role expectations, and parenthood. While the tone of many of these topics remains somewhat problem-oriented, this group procedure differs from others in that the aim is primarily preventive.

Some programs which move even further from the problem focus are those developed by H. A. Otto. These programs involve a variety of techniques. One involves developing an inventory of personal strengths (Otto, H. A., 1962). This inventory was designed to sensitize people to their own positive qualities. Another technique of Otto's is the "action program" in which participants within a group actively pursue the development of new strengths in the home environment. These "action programs" and strength inventories are discussed within groups whose support and acceptance is designed to facilitate sensitivity to and development of strengths.

Otto has also developed a group procedure termed "The Multiple Strength Perception Method" (1966b). One group member volunteers to be the "target person." This person enumerates and describes to the group what he perceives to be his own strengths. The group then responds by enumerating what other members perceive the target person's strengths to be, and what appears to block his use of these strengths. The group then fantasizes how they would see the target person in five years if he were to utilize all of his strengths. A follow-up study (Salazar, A. A., 1966) of the Multiple Strength Perception Method reports that participants found this experience very effective in enabling them to recognize and develop their strengths and potentialities.

Otto has published no "outcome studies" to substantiate his impressions of the results of these several techniques; however, based on self-report questionnaires completed by group participants, Otto feels that these procedures have a positive and lasting effect.

Positive Aspects of Marriage: Writing and Research

Similar to the lack of positive focus in most of the clinical approaches to marriage is the relative lack of writing and research on the positive aspects of marriage. An area which somewhat approximates a positive emphasis is the study of marital adjustment, but even here, it is the absence of the negative, rather than the positive factors which are stressed.

Conceptions of what a "good" or a "strong" marriage is, and what factors contribute to this goodness, have altered considerably in the last few decades. In 1940, Faris writes, with the implicit assumption that the permanence and stability of the union of marriage is the ultimate goal, that the "seven pillars of family strength" are the church, the state, the school, the community, the neighborhood, the welfare organizations, and scientific research on marriage. All of these factors are external to the marriage, and are primarily forces which lend permanence and stability to the family unit rather than improving the quality of the marital relationship. In 1947, Lottier writes that the goals of marriage counseling are: 1) to keep the family unit intact, 2) to help the couple come to the decision

to have children, if they are not yet parents, and 3) to help the spouses accept their culturally defined sex roles. Here again, marriage is conceived of as a social institution rather than an interpersonal relationship. Lindeman, in 1948, still focused primarily on the institutional aspects of a "strong marriage," but also stressed some interpersonal factors such as loyalty and confidence between spouses.

Studies in the last decade have come to emphasize the interpersonal factors of a strong marriage, almost to the exclusion of the traditional, institutional aspects. The concept of marriage as a social institution is gradually being redefined in personal terms. Herbert Otto (1966a) writes that institutions should only function to serve as a framework for the actualization of human potential. He states that interpersonal relationships are the major medium for this realization of human potential.

In line with this more recent interpersonal focus, a widely used contemporary test of marital adjustment (Locke, H. J. and Wallace, K. M., 1959) classifies as "well adjusted" those couples who tend to: 1) feel very positive about their marriage, 2) are in agreement on important matters related to their marriage, 3) tend to interact in a non-dominant way with one another, and 4) are in good communication with each other. Recent studies stress such personal factors as empathy, congruence of perception and mutual need satisfaction as being of primary importance in a good marriage (Luckey, E., 1960a; Dymond,

R., 1954; Winch, R. F. and Ktsanes, T. V., 1954).

Otto's work is also very much in accordance with the contemporary focus on the interpersonal rather than the institutional aspects of marriage. Otto, who has worked extensively in the area of family strengths (1962, 1964), characterizes a strong marriage as a relationship in which there is high integration of complementary needs and resources, interdependency as well as independency, warmth, affection, support, sensitivity to the needs of the other, consideration, understanding, common interests and goals, the ability to communicate, and the ability to provide support and encouragement.

Development of Human Potential: Growth Groups

Another area which is very pertinent to the present investigation is the study of the development of human potential. Much of the work on techniques to develop human potential has not been concerned with the marital relationship, but with human interaction in general. Some of these techniques have grown out of group psychotherapy, but more often have developed from the encounter group or sensitivity group experience. Some authors (Shostrom, E. L. and Knapp, R. R., 1966) de-emphasize the distinction between therapeutic and "growth" experiences, saying that self-actualization takes place during the course of therapeutic treatment. Other authors feel that the methods as well as the goals of the two types of group experiences are divergent in most aspects. An examination of descriptions of

techniques used in therapy groups and growth groups suggests that there is a good deal of overlap between the various types of group experience.

Harman (1966) does not remove "T groups," or sensitivity groups from the realm of a problem focus. He writes that "The individual is helped to become aware of problem areas in his life . . . and encouraged to search for the genesis of these Through a meaningful, emotional relationship with another or other persons, and in a supportive environment, he comes to an increased understanding of himself." This analysis of "problem areas" does not seem to differ greatly from the more conventional group psychotherapy techniques.

Garwood (1967) stresses the development of positive potential in "T groups" rather than the reduction of psychopathology. She describes a group experience which involves the experiencing and verbalization of feelings in an accepting and supportive atmosphere. Garwood cites the following as the most common benefits of "T groups": 1) education regarding a psychological view of life, 2) psychological perceptivity, 3) improved solutions to psychological problems, 4) decreased alienation and increased accessibility, and 5) more communicative relationships with spouses. Gibb (1968) moves even further away from the more traditional techniques in conceptualizing "emergent groups" or growth groups as those in which all participants, therapist or trainer included, seek personal,

role-free depth experiences. No teaching or helping function is involved, and the emphasis is on openness and expression of love to create the climate for growth.

While there is an abundance of divergent theoretical speculation concerning what conditions are most facilitative for various types of "growth" experience, more research studies designed to empirically test the presumed effects of growth group experiences are needed. Some of the presumed effects have been supported in research findings. Delaney and Heiman (1966) found that a "T group" experience was more effective in increasing sensitivity to non-verbal cues than a classroom technique designed to increase awareness of the cues. Culbert, Clark and Boheler (1968) demonstrated that self-actualization, as measured by Shostrom's Personal Orientation Inventory, increased following "T group" experience for those persons who fell within normal range before "T group" training. No significant change occurred in those persons who scored high on "self-actualization" prior to training.

Douglas Bunker (in Bradford, L. P., Gibb, J. K. and Benne, K. D., 1964, p. 424), in a study of the long-range effects of participation in sensitivity training, found that participants were better able to communicate with their co-workers, had more sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others, increased understanding of themselves, and had a more analytic understanding of human behavior.

In summary, it can be said that much of the focus in

past conceptualizations of marriage has been basically problem-oriented. The recent writings of Otto, as well as the group work of both Otto and Buchanan reflect a very hopeful trend in focusing on the more positive aspects of marriage. Many of the growth group techniques which aim toward the development of human potential do not deal with married couples in particular, but their methods are equally applicable within the context of marriage. The research findings on the effects of these growth group techniques are limited but encouraging, showing positive change in communication patterns, sensitivity to feelings, more positive self concept, and better patterns of interpersonal interaction.

The Marital Enrichment Group

The Marital Enrichment Group (MEG) technique developed by Carl Clarke utilizes many procedures similar to those in Otto's group techniques and in sensitivity groups. The MEG is conducted on a weekly basis for six sessions. The group consists of five or six married couples. These couples are grouped in a variety of ways during the six sessions in order to achieve varying group interactions. Sometimes the group sits in a circle, sometimes husbands and wives form different circles, either concentrically or separately, and occasionally couples separate and interact individually. One special grouping, which is generally considered to achieve the most intense involvement and

interaction, is the "sharing seat" procedure. In this procedure, the whole group sits in a tight circle. One point in the circle is designated as the "sharing seat." Each couple, in turn, sits in the "sharing seat" facing one another, very close together, communicating on a given topic and sharing feelings as the group shares in their experience by silently listening to the couple's interaction.

The content of each session concerns some positive aspect of marriage. Some of the topics include goals for the marriage, ways of communicating love, the positive qualities of oneself and one's spouse, and ways in which partners meet each other's needs.

One of the most important processes of the MEG is the sharing of feelings. Throughout every session there is frequent alternation between discussion of the assigned topics and expression of the feelings evoked during this interaction. While the topics are all positively oriented, negative as well as positive feelings may be expressed. This process was designed to sensitize persons to their feelings, and to promote the ability to express feelings.

Many positive effects have been observed by group leaders and reported by group participants as a result of participation in the MEG. Couples tend to become much more aware of the positive aspects of their relationship. Interaction with other couples helps them to become sensitized to qualities of their own relationship and help them gain perspective about their relationship. Group members tend

to become much more aware of their feelings, and the expression of feelings is facilitated. In general, participants tend to be more sensitized to the positive qualities of their marriage.

Potential Areas of Change

As a result of participating in the MEG it was expected that some changes would occur in a variety of areas related to the marital relationship.

Marital communication patterns. -- Buchanan (1961) found that reported verbal communication patterns among married couples changed as a result of a special classroom group experience which she developed as part of a marriage education course. While the MEG differs from Buchanan's group, the similar emphases upon communication and interaction could be expected to have a similar effect upon the MEG participants.

Many authors have stressed the importance of communication in a strong marriage. Otto (1962) writes that full, open communication in interpersonal relationships is one of the major forces in the development of human potentiality. As the MEG strives to increase the potential for human growth within the marital relationship, it might be expected that one of the most relevant changes brought about through participation in the group would relate to communication between partners. McGrath and Altman (1966) write that attraction and communication are interdependent, offering further support for the expectation that the process of

re-sensitizing mutual attraction between partners in the MEG would bring about a change in communication patterns.

Non-verbal as well as verbal communication patterns have been found to change as a result of participation in various sensitivity or "growth" groups (Delaney, D. J. and Heiman, R. A., 1966; Schindler-Rainman, E., 1968). Kahn (1969), who developed an instrument to measure non-verbal communication skills among married couples, reports that happily married couples are more accurate in their ability to communicate non-verbally. Accuracy in non-verbal communication requires couples to be very sensitive to subtle cues from others such as gestures, facial expressions and voice intonations. The partners must, in effect, be very sensitized to one another. It might be predicted that such sensitivity, which has been found to be more characteristic of happily married couples, would be increased through participation in the MEG.

Greater understanding between partners. -- As a concomitant of the predicted more open, sensitive communication between partners, it might also be expected that increased mutual understanding would follow. Many studies have demonstrated the importance of "knowing" and "being known" to the marital relationship. Dymond (1954) reports that the better each partner understands the other's perception of himself the more satisfactory the relationship. Luckey (1959, 1960) also stresses the importance of mutual understanding in marriage, but finds that it seems more important to

marital happiness that both partners agree about who the husband is than about who the wife is. Understanding between partners is considered by Otto (1962) to be one of the basic family strengths. Tharpe (1963) writes that "when the self as seen by the self and the self as seen by the spouse become more nearly equal stimulus configurations . . . happiness increases." It would be expected, due to the emphasis of the MEG upon more open, positive communication between partners, that increasing congruence of perceptions between marriage partners would result.

Higher regard for oneself, one's spouse and one's marriage.--

A supportive, accepting positive view toward another person is considered to be a condition that greatly facilitates the growth of human potential and promotes mental health (Gibb, J.R., 1968). A more positive view of oneself has also been found to be a strong indicator of emotional health (Rogers, C. and Dymond, R., 1954). Kelly (1941) writes that both of these conditions, a positive regard for the other and for oneself, have been related to personal satisfaction in marriage. It would then be expected that through the variety of experiences in which positive communication occurs in the MEG that couples would increase the positiveness with which they view themselves, their spouses and their marital relationships.

Patterns of interaction between spouses. -- Due to the new "open structure" of marriage, with its relative lack of defined sex roles, each newly married couple is faced with

the task of working out appropriate division of labor and responsibility within their own marriage. In making this adjustment, the patterns of conflict resolution, decision making and problem-solving become an important determinant and/or indicator of the level of adjustment within the marriage. Raush (1963) found, in his study of interaction and problem-solving patterns of married couples, that couples with closer, more empathetic relationships are much more efficient in problem-solving. Carkuff (1967) writes that deep personal regard is basic to facilitative interpersonal processes. Because the MEG is designed to facilitate such responses as empathy, closeness and positive regard, it would also be expected to influence patterns of conflict resolution and to perhaps increase joint problem-solving ability of the participating couples.

Summary

The present study was designed as a preliminary investigation of some of the effects of the Marital Enrichment Group (MEG) upon participating married couples. The MEG, developed by Dr. Carl Clarke, is a group procedure designed to increase awareness and communication of positive feelings between marriage partners. This group procedure is very innovative in that it was designed to have preventive as well as therapeutic value, and its focus is positive rather than problem-oriented, taking its orientation from the recent movement toward the development of human potential.

The specific areas which will be investigated in assessing change brought about through MEG participation are: 1) communication patterns, 2) mutual understanding, 3) positive regard for self and spouse, and 4) interaction and problem-solving patterns.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

Twenty-six married couples participated in this study. In the majority of these couples, one member, generally the husband, was a student at the University of Florida. All couples were volunteers who became aware of the MEG either through a notice placed in the university newspaper, or through announcements made by various campus groups. One pre-existing group of six couples volunteered as a unit to participate in the MEG. Even though the conditions differed for this group due to their previous acquaintance, they were accepted into the experimental group.¹ As well as practical considerations allowed, couples were alternately assigned to the experimental group (E group) or the control group (C group), in the order in which they volunteered. This alternating assignment could not be done in the case of the pre-existing

1 Dr. Clarke, who has had several experiences in leading pre-existing groups through the MEG, felt that their participation in this study would not bias the results in a positive direction, and, if any differences occurred between these couples and the other experimental couples, it would be in the direction of less positive change.

group of six couples. Another consideration which interfered with alternating assignment was the need to complete the seven-week MEG experience within the confines of the ten-week academic quarter. To accomplish this, the MEG groups had to begin by the third week of the quarter. At this point in time an insufficient number of couples had volunteered to complete the C group. Therefore, the three couples who volunteered after this date were all assigned to the C group. In all, 13 couples were assigned to the E group and 13 couples to the C group. Except in the case of the three couples assigned after the cut-off date in the fall quarter, no couple knew of his assignment to the E group or C group until they had completed the first battery of testing. The couples who were then assigned to the C group were told that they would have to wait until the following quarter, after the completion of this study, to participate in the MEG.

The nature of the MEG was described to all couples who volunteered. Those who voiced a need for some type of counseling due to marital difficulties were not accepted, but were referred to appropriate resources. A second requirement for participation was that all couples must have been married for a minimum of one year. This stipulation was placed upon participants because it was assumed that the MEG would be most beneficial to and effect the greatest change in couples who have become somewhat desensitized to the positive qualities of their marriage over a period

of time.

The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test was administered to all couples during the first testing session in order to help support the contention that all participating couples fell within the normal range on marital adjustment. Locke and Wallace report that their sample group of maladjusted couples had a mean marital adjustment score of 71.7, while their sample group of "exceptionally well-adjusted couples" showed a mean score of 135.9. The couples participating in the present study showed a mean adjustment score of 115, suggesting that they tend, as a group, to be normally adjusted. No significant difference was found between the level of adjustment for the E group and the C group ($t = 1.58, p > .05$).

The average length of marriage in the E group was 5.2 years, while it was 3.7 years in the C group. Eighty-six percent of the E group had been graduated from college, while only 56 percent of the C group were college graduates. These differences in age and education were largely a function of the pre-existing group of six couples in the E group, who tended to be an older group of professional people. Because no significant differences were found in level of marital adjustment between groups, and because the method of data analysis (using change scores rather than absolute scores) serves as a control for any initial differences between the two groups, these differences in education and length of marriage were

not considered detrimental to the study.

The 13 E group couples were divided into three groups. One group consisted of the six couples who had volunteered to participate as a unit. Four of the remaining E group couples were assigned to a second group. An additional couple, who did not participate in the study because they had not been married for one year, was placed in this group in order to fill it to normal group capacity. The remaining three experimental couples were assigned to a third group. Two additional couples, married less than one year, were also assigned to this group to fill the quota. The leaders for these three groups were persons with a background in psychology who had been personally trained by Dr. Clarke in leading the MEG.

Instruments

Marital Communication Scale

This instrument was developed by Kahn (1969) to measure patterns of non-verbal communication between spouses. Kahn describes his test as an objective, behavioral measure of non-verbal communication accuracy. This instrument measures sensitivity to such subtle communications as facial expression, gestures, and vocal intonations. Each spouse is required to communicate one of three alternative intentions to his partner in eight hypothetical marital situations. The receiver's only means of discriminating among the alternative intentions is the communicator's non-verbal communications

as he verbally communicates standardized messages pertaining to each of the eight situations. These standardized messages are worded in such a way that they could mean each of the three possible intentions. Because communication is dependent upon both the sender and receiver, a couple obtains a joint couple score rather than individual scores. Couple scores may range from 0 to 16. Due to the relatively complicated administration and scoring procedures, they will not be explained in the main body of the text. See Appendix A for a complete copy of administration procedures, test items, and scoring procedures.

Personality Trait List

This instrument was developed by Brown to study interpersonal perception in dyads. It consists of 135 traits based on the factor-analytic studies of R. B. Cattell. Five or six of the most highly loaded words at either end of Cattell's 13 orthogonal dimensions of personality were chosen to make up the check list. While Brown measured a large number of variables using this check list, he writes that "objective emergence," or "the extent to which the self of one partner emerges into the objective view of the other," is the key concept to develop out of his many studies. A second variable which Brown worked with is the positive/negative dimension of perception. These two variables, "emergence" and the positive/negative dimension, are the ones which were investigated in the present study.

Each subject filled out the Personality Trait List twice,

once to describe the self ("What am I really like?"), and once to describe the spouse ("What is he or she really like?"). No limit was placed on the number of adjectives checked on each checklist. Emergence is measured by comparing each person's description of himself with his partner's description of him. It is a measure of the degree to which the two descriptions overlap, computed by dividing the number of overlapping items by the sum of all adjectives used to describe the person, minus the number of overlapping items.

$$\frac{\text{overlapping items}}{\text{total items minus overlapping items}}$$

Thus, emergence scores may range from 0 to 1.0.

Positiveness/negativeness was measured by the number of positive and negative adjectives checked on each checklist. Brown designed the checklist in such a way that among the 135 traits, 24 are positive and 24 are negative.

See Appendix B for a copy of the Personality Trait List.

Marital Roles Scale

This instrument was developed by Clarke (1969) to measure satisfaction with marital roles. The instrument is unusual in that it allows each person to set up his own criteria upon which to make his judgments as to degree of satisfaction. There are five subdivisions of this instrument: 1) Qualities and characteristics which you feel are important to have as a husband (or wife). 2) Qualities and characteristics which you feel are important for your husband (or wife) to have. 3) Aspects and qualities

of a marital relationship which you feel are most important to have in your marriage. 4) Marital functions and responsibilities which you feel you should carry out as a husband (wife). 5) Functions and responsibilities which you feel your husband (wife) should carry out. After listing the five items for each subdivision, the subject then rates his satisfaction with the degree to which he (or his spouse) manifests the quality, characteristic, function or responsibility indicated by each item. A 9 point scale of satisfaction is used, ranging from "not at all satisfied" (1) to "completely satisfied" (9). The sum of the five satisfaction ratings for each category is taken as a general rating of whatever aspect is covered by that subdivision. Each person obtains five sub-scores, one for each subdivision, as well as an overall satisfaction score, the sum of the five sub-scores. See Appendix C for a copy of Clarke's Marital Roles Scale.

Interaction Testing

This instrument was designed by Roman and Bauman to measure patterns of conflict resolution and joint problem-solving ability. Items were taken from the Comprehension and Similarities subtests of the Wechsler-Bellview Intelligence Scale. Each spouse fills out the items separately. These sheets are then removed and the couple is asked to answer the same items jointly. Comparisons between the individual and joint responses are then made. Roman and Bauman scored this test in terms of I. Q. as well

as decision making processes. In the present study, however, items were only scored in terms of the decision-making processes of the couple.

Joint responses are judged according to four categories developed by Roman and Bauman: 1) Dominance - when the answer of one partner dominates in the joint response, 2) Combination - when the joint response is a combination of the two individual answers, 3) Emergence - when the joint response contains major elements not contained in either individual responses, and 4) Reinforcement - when the same answer is given by both partners, individually and jointly.

The decision-making process is also scored by assigning the symbols +, -, and 0 to each joint response. A plus is scored when the joint answer is superior to one or both individual answers (according to the Wechsler-Bellview scoring standards). A minus is scored when the joint answer is poorer than one or both individual answers. A zero is scored when the individual and joint answers are of the same value. This scoring technique allows an evaluation of the effectiveness of the problem solving patterns of the couple, while the scoring categories described in the previous paragraph allow an evaluation of the patterns themselves.

2 A more complete description of administration and scoring procedures can be obtained from:

Melvin Roman and Gerald Bauman
Division of Social and Community Psychiatry
Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Yeshiva University

Group Experience Evaluation

This instrument is a 36-item self-report questionnaire designed especially for this study in order to allow participants in the MEG to report changes in themselves, their spouses, and their marital relationships which they feel have resulted from their experiences in the MEG. The items were prepared on the basis of responses to open-ended questions concerning changes brought about by the MEG which were responded to by couples who had previously participated in the MEG. The first eight items deal with awareness of the self and the relationship. These can be responded to on a 4-point scale (1 - no change, 4 - considerable change). The remaining 28 items concern a variety of behaviors, feelings, and attitudes regarding the self, the spouse and the marital relationship. These items can be responded to on an 8-point scale (0 - not relevant to my experience, 1- considerable decrease, 4 - no change, 7 - considerable increase). A two directional scale was used for these 28 items, as a decrease was expected for some items, while an increase was expected for others. See Appendix D for a copy of this questionnaire.

Short Marital Adjustment Test

This is a 15-item marital adjustment scale developed by Locke and Wallace (1959). Locke and Wallace define marital adjustment as "accomodation of a husband and wife to each other at a given time." This instrument was used, as was previously mentioned, to confirm our expectation that

participating couples fell within the normal range on marital adjustment. For more information concerning this instrument refer to Locke and Wallace (1959).

Experimental Design

The majority of "outcome" studies of group processes have dealt with group psychotherapy rather than "growth groups," however, the criticisms of the group therapy studies apply equally well to all group processes. Parloff (1967) criticises most outcome studies for not clearly specifying the goals of the treatment process, but rather tending to claim that virtually any positive signs following the group treatment have resulted from such treatment. The writer hopes to have avoided this criticism by clearly specifying what outcomes are predicted, and relating these outcomes to the group process. Gundlach (1967) writes that the outcome measure should be related to the method of therapy. Again, in the present study, all predicted changes are related to procedures in the MEG. Gundlach also stresses the importance of performance tests in measuring change. Both the Marital Communication Scale and Interaction Testing satisfy this stipulation. Pattison (1965) writes of the need to describe explicitly what practices are used, and what actually occurs in each session. The following description of the MEG adequately satisfies this requirement, although research on the on-going processes within the MEG are certainly needed. Pattison remarks that most of the outcome studies to date

have been concerned with fairly regressed patient-populations, with relatively little research done on group methods with higher level, more complex, verbal persons. This study addresses itself to the need for research with a more integrated, verbal population.

Experimental Treatment

The Group Leader's Manual³ for the MEG describes a well-defined set of procedures for an orientation meeting and six weekly sessions. The MEG has been designed in this way in order that this procedure can be used by lay leaders as well as professionals. Ideally, the group leader plays a very minimal role, serving to initiate the various group activities, and entering to redirect the group as the occasion calls for it. Although there is a certain prescribed set of activities for each session, there is a great deal of flexibility allowed in terms of group interaction. While some of the best interaction occurs in groups of four or five couples, each group officially contains six in order to safeguard against having too few couples when some do not attend.

Orientation Meeting

The initial meeting of the group is for general orientation

3 A copy of this manual can be obtained from:
 Dr. Carl Clarke
 Marriage and College Life Project
 University of Florida
 Gainesville, Florida

purposes. During this session the general emphases of the group procedures are outlined for the participants.

Attendance and active participation in all activities, as well as other requirements of the group are stressed. In addition to attendance of the six sessions, couples are required to complete written assignments which pertain to the following week's session, as well as engage in certain communication exercises at home from time to time. Written assignments are kept in a private log book, and spouses are cautioned against reading each other's entries.

First session log book assignments:

- 1) Goals for myself: what you want to be like as a husband (wife) in 3 to 5 years?
- 2) What do you want your spouse to be like in 3 to 5 years?
- 3) What do you want your relationship to be like in 3 to 5 years?

Session One

The group: Likeable behavior. -- The group forms a tight circle. Husbands are asked to discuss what really pleases them about their marriages. Then wives are asked to describe their feelings while listening to this discussion. In this exercise, as in every exercise in MEG, while the content of discussion is always in a positive vein, the feelings expressed may be negative as well as positive. Wives are then asked to discuss what is really pleasing to them about their marriages, followed by husbands describing their feelings while listening to this. In all discussions in the

MEG participants are encouraged to interact spontaneously, rather than each person taking a turn.

Unrelated marital dyad: Goals for the marriage. -- All husbands pair off with wives other than their own and discuss the goals written in the log assignment. These goals are then written on large sheets of paper.

The group: Sharing goals. -- Each group member presents his written list of goals to the group. After the presentation his spouse describes what feelings he (she) experienced during the presentation.

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- Following all of the presentations, the group as a whole discusses their feelings about the "goals exercise."

Second session log book Assignments:

- 1) Discuss with your partner for 15 or 20 minutes the goals presented tonight and your feelings about this experience. Record these feelings in the log book.
- 2) List all the things that make you feel loved, valued, respected, understood, and appreciated by your partner.
- 3) Make a list of all positive feelings you experienced toward your spouse each day. Try to estimate how frequently you had each feeling during a typical day.

Session Two

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- Each person shares with the group the feelings he had while discussing goals during the week.

Separate role groups: My partner's positive behavior. --

With the entire group together in a tight circle, couples take turns sitting face-to-face, close together, in the "sharing seat." The husband tells the wife the ways she makes him feel valued, loved, etc. The wife then responds with her feelings while listening to him. Then, with roles reversed, the wife tells the husband, and he describes his feelings. Following this is a general supportive expression of feelings from the group. Each couple in turn takes the "sharing seat."

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- Following the "sharing seat" procedure the group as a whole engages in a general discussion of reactions to and feelings about the exercise.

Third session log book assignments:

1) List specific things which your spouse does during this next week to communicate that he loves you, values you, etc. Then, try the "sharing seat" procedure sometime during the week and discuss the above topic.

2) List all of the things you do to communicate that you love, value, respect, understand, and appreciate your spouse.

3) List the different kinds of negative feelings you experienced toward your spouse each day. Try to estimate how frequently you experienced each feeling during a typical day.

Session Three

The group: Feedback about communication assignment. --

The group discusses their feelings when they tried the "sharing seat" procedure at home.

Marital dyads: My positive behavior. -- Couples go off separately and share with each other their list of things which they do to communicate love, getting feedback from their partner about whether these actions made their partner feel loved.

Role groups in concentric circles: Feedback about feelings. -- Wives form an inner circle, husbands an outer circle, while wives describe the feelings they experienced during the previous exercise. Husbands describe their feelings at that moment. Then husbands take the inner circle and, with roles reversed, this procedure is repeated.

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- The entire group shares feelings about the exercises of the session.

Fourth session Log Book assignment:

1) Record specific behaviors and activities during the next week with which you communicate love to your spouse. Then, sometime during the week, discuss these, using the "sharing seat."

2) List all of the positive traits, qualities, characteristics, etc. which you see in your spouse. Make a similar list about yourself.

3) List your positive feelings during the week - same as in second session Log Book assignments.

Session Four

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- Group discussion of what happened during the "sharing seat" procedure at home during the week.

Sharing seat arrangement: Partner's positive qualities. Each couple engages in turn in the "sharing seat" exercise to share the positive qualities each person sees in his partner. This follows the same procedure described in Session Two.

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- Group discussion of feelings about the session's "sharing seat" procedure.

Fifth session Log Book assignments:

1) Discuss with your partner the list you made of your own positive qualities and compare this with the list he made of yours.

2) List the needs which your spouse meets for you.

3) List the negative feelings you experienced toward your spouse during the week. (Same as in assignments for Session Three.)

Session Five

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- The group shares the feelings they experienced during their discussion during the week of their own positive traits.

Role groups in concentric circles: Needs my partner fulfills. -- Following the concentric circles routine described in Session Three, the group discusses their needs and how they are met by their spouse.

Marital dyads: New ways to express love. -- Couples separate from the group as in Session Three. They are instructed to sit silently together and think of two new ways they would like to express love for their partner, then to think of two new ways in which they would like their partner to express his love. After several minutes of silence the partners are told to share these thoughts with each other. Then the group forms a circle to discuss what they have just experienced.

Sixth session log book assignments:

In addition to written assignments, a sharing seat exercise is assigned to discuss the behaviors of your spouse which have met your needs since the previous session.

1) Positive effects - In what way has this group experience been beneficial to you, to your spouse, to your marriage? Discuss.

2) Negative effects - In what ways has this group experience been detrimental to you, your spouse, your relationship? Discuss.

3) Group Process Evaluation - What aspects, procedures did you find most meaningful? What aspects, procedures had a negative effect upon you?

Session Six

The group: Feedback about feelings. -- Discussion of "sharing seat" procedure during the week.

Marital dyads: Non-verbal mirroring exercise. Persons

stand facing their spouse, palms out about six inches from his spouse's palms. The exercise involves the partners attempting to move their hands in unison without experiencing a conscious effort to lead or follow.

Marital dyads: Verbal and non-verbal summing up. --

Couples separate as in Session Three. First they are instructed to share feelings about what has happened to them as a function of the MEG. Then, without talking, the partners are instructed to focus on a strong, positive feeling and communicate this feeling non-verbally to their partner.

The group: Feedback about feelings. The group shares the feelings they experience as each couple describes their experience in the previous exercise.

The group: Summing-up feedback about feelings. -- The group shares feelings about the total group experience and about other persons in the group.

Testing Procedure

The main experimental design for this study is the "Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design" which controls for the main effects of history, maturation and testing (Campbell, D. T., 1957). In addition, a follow-up study, two months after post-testing, was conducted with the E group only.

Each couple was tested individually. The Marital Communication Scale was administered first. Then the written tests were administered in the following order: Marital

Roles Scale, Personality Trait List, and Interaction Testing. In the administration of the Personality Trait List, the order of the two forms (descriptions of self and spouse) were alternated to counterbalance any order effects.

During the first testing session all subjects also filled out the Locke-Wallace Short Marital Adjustment Scale. Pre-testing for E group couples took place between one and two weeks prior to the commencement of the MEG. This testing session required approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

During the post-testing session the same tests were administered, excluding the Locke-Wallace, in the same order. In addition to the four primary instruments, the E group couples also filled out the Group Experience Evaluation. On the Marital Roles Scale the previous ratings had been removed from the forms and each subject was asked to re-rate himself and his spouse on the previously recorded items. Post-testing took place within two weeks following the group experience for E group couples. The same period of time elapsed between pre- and post-testing for the C group couples.

In follow-up testing, only E group couples were tested. This testing session took place two months following the couples' participation in the MEG. During this session the Personality Trait List, the Marital Roles Scale and the Group Experience Evaluation were re-administered.

On the Marital Roles Scale, the ratings made during post-testing were removed and subjects were asked to rate, for the third time, items which they had written during the pre-testing session.

Treatment Procedure

Each of the three experimental groups participated in the MEG during the fall academic quarter, 1969, at the University of Florida. The groups met weekly, in the evening, for a total of seven sessions. These sessions were held in private homes. For the most part, participants sat on the floor during these sessions, which tended to decrease the formality of the group, thereby enhancing group interaction.

Hypotheses

The general areas in which change might be expected to occur as a result of participation in the MEG were discussed in Chapter One. The instruments which were used to measure change in these areas were described in the present chapter. The specific hypotheses tested in the present study are listed below:

Hypothesis I. -- The E group will show greater positive change in accuracy of non-verbal communication than the C group, measured by their performance on the Marital Communication Scale. (This difference will be measured by a t test analysis of the differences between the mean change

scores for the two groups.)

Hypothesis II. -- The E group will show greater positive change in agreement between spouses concerning one another's personality traits than the C group, as measured by "emergence" scores on the Personality Trait List. (This will be measured by a t test analysis of the mean change scores for the two groups.)

Hypothesis III. -- The E group will show a more positive change in their view of self and spouse, as measured by a greater increase in the number of positive adjectives checked and a greater decrease in the number of negative adjectives checked on the Personality Trait List in describing both themselves and their spouses, than the C group will. (This will be measured by a t test analysis of the mean change scores for the two groups.) Secondly, the E group will show a greater positive change in satisfaction with the self, the spouse, and their marital relationship, as measured by a more positive change, than the C group on each of the five subscales of the Marital Roles Scale, as well as in the overall score. (This will be measured by a 2 way analysis of variance.)

Hypothesis IV. -- The E group will show a more positive increase in effectiveness of problem solving as measured by the Interaction Testing method. Specifically, the E group will show a greater increase of plus scores and a greater decrease in minus scores than the C group; the E group will show a greater decrease in number of dominance

responses and a greater increase in the number of combination and emergence responses than the C group. (All of these comparisons will be made by t test analyses of the mean change scores for the two groups.)

Hypothesis V. -- No specific predictions will be made concerning the Group Experience Evaluation beyond the general prediction that positive change will be reported in some of the areas covered in this inventory. (Degree of change will be measured by computing the mean number of points above or below the "no change" point for each item, across all subjects.)

Follow-Up Hypotheses - E Group Couples Only

Hypothesis II - Follow-up. -- A significant decrease in emergence scores on the Personality Trait List is predicted when the follow-up score is compared to the post-testing score. (This difference will be measured by a t test analysis.)

Hypothesis III - Follow-up. -- The number of positive adjectives checked on the Personality Trait List during follow-up testing is predicted to be less and the number of negative adjectives to be more than the number checked during post-testing, in describing both the self and the spouse. (A t test analysis will be used to measure this difference.) Secondly, the scores on each of the five subscales of the Marital Roles Scale, as well as the overall score, is expected to be lower in follow-up testing than in post-testing. (A three-way factorial

analysis will be used to measure this change.)

Hypothesis V - Follow-up. -- On the Group Experience Evaluation, a decrease is expected in the amount of change reported for each separate item. (No statistical tests will be used to measure the significance of any differences found.)

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Pre-testing - Post-testing Comparisons

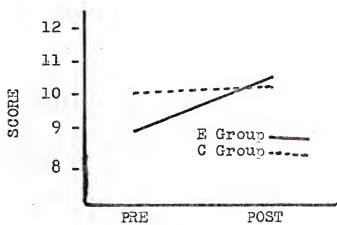
Hypothesis I

The first hypothesis in the present study dealt with sensitivity to non-verbal or subtle communication skills as measured by Kahn's Marital Communication Scale. A graphic presentation of a comparison between the E group and C group according to mean change score is presented in Fig. 1. The E group mean rose 1.4 points, while the C group mean score rose .2 points. A one-tailed t test analysis between the mean change scores for each group showed this difference to be significant ($t=1.78$, $p<.05$). Thus, Hypothesis I, predicting greater improvement in non-verbal communication skills in the E group, was supported.

Hypothesis II

The second hypothesis made the prediction that "emergence" between marital partners, as measured by Brown's Personality Trait List, would show a greater positive change for the E group than for the C group. Emergence scores may range from 0 to 1.0, as explained earlier. Both E group mean change score and C group

FIGURE I
CHANGE ON MARITAL COMMUNICATION SCALE
FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP



mean change score showed a very slight positive change. A one-tailed t test analysis showed the E group mean change score of .043 not to differ significantly from the C group mean change score of .014 ($t = .81$, $p > .05$). Thus, although there was a slight trend toward greater positive change for the E group, Hypothesis II was not supported.

Hypothesis III

The third hypothesis predicted that the E group would experience a greater positive change than the C group in the degree to which they viewed themselves, their spouses, and their marital relationship favorably. This hypothesis involved two instruments: Personality Trait List (positive/negative dimension) and the Marital Roles Scale.

Personality Trait List. - The Personality Trait List contains 24 positive and 24 negative adjectives. The list was filled out twice, once in describing the self and once in describing the spouse. Thus, there are four comparisons to be made: self-positive, self-negative, spouse-positive, and spouse-negative. There was no significant difference between the groups on the mean change score in number of positive adjectives used to describe the self ($t = .89$, $p > .05$). There was a significant reduction, however, in the number of negative adjectives used to describe the self in the E group,

as compared to the C group ($t = 2.63$, $p < .05$). There was no significant change in the number of positive adjectives ($t = .02$, $p > .05$) or negative adjectives ($t = .27$, $p > .05$) used to describe the spouse in the E group as compared to the C group.

Marital Roles Scale. - The Marital Roles Scale is concerned with five different aspects of marital role satisfaction. Each aspect is dealt with by five items, giving a total of 25 items for the entire scale. These items are rated on a 9 point Likert-type scale. The highest possible score for each of the five sections is 45 points, and the highest possible overall score is 225. In terms of overall score, the E group mean change score was 12.18, while the C group mean change score was 4.91. A two-way analysis of variance with repeated measures on one factor was computed on the five separate mean change scores for each group. The two levels of the first factor were the treatment groups, E group and C group, while the five repeated measures on the second factor were the five mean change scores of the five subscales on the Marital Roles Scale. This analysis showed the difference in overall mean change between groups to be significant. (See Table I for the summary table of the analysis of variance.) The interaction between the two factors was also found to be significant. An internal analysis to investigate this interaction revealed that only one of the five subscales

showed a significant difference between groups beyond the .05 level, the subscale dealing with the qualities and characteristics of the marital relationship. These differences are illustrated graphically in Fig. 2. While only one of the five comparisons showed a significant difference between groups, all of the differences were in the predicted direction. (See Table II for a list of mean change scores and results of t test analyses.)

Hypothesis IV

The fourth hypothesis predicted that the E group would show a greater change toward more productive, less defensive patterns of interaction as measured by the Interaction Testing method. Specifically, according to Roman and Bauman's scoring method, a greater decrease in dominance responses and an increase in combination and emergence responses was predicted for the E group, compared to the C group. It was also predicted that the number of plus scores would increase and the number of minus scores would decrease for the E group, compared to the C group. No differences were found, significant at the .05 level, on any of these measures. Several measures did show a difference significant at the .10 level. One of these was a measure developed during this study called "maladaptive dominance." This measure takes dominance patterns into account only when the dominance of one partner over the other serves to lower the joint score for that item.

TABLE I

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: MARITAL ROLES SCALE

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Treatment Groups	120.77	1	120.77	8.72*
Subscale of MRS	94.66	4	23.67	1.71
Interaction	653.25	4	163.31	11.79*
Error	2909.32	210	13.85	—
Total	3778.00	219	17.25	—

F < .05

FIGURE II

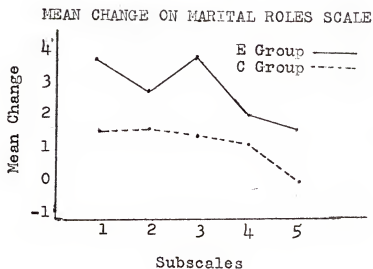


TABLE II
SUMMARY OF T TEST ANALYSES OF MEAN CHANGE
SCORES ON MARITAL ROLES SCALE

Subscale	E Group $\bar{x}$ Change	C Group $\bar{x}$ Change	T Score
1	3.36	1.45	1.53*
2	2.41	1.45	.91
3	3.18	1.32	1.69**
4	2.00	.73	1.05
5	1.32	-.09	1.42*

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

The E group showed a greater decrease in maladaptive dominance than the C group ($t = 1.65$, $p < .10$). Minus scores in the E group, compared to the C group, showed a decrease ($t = 1.55$, $p < .10$). Husband dominance in the E group showed a greater increase than in the C group ($t = 1.50$, $p < .10$). This difference is in the opposite direction from that predicted. There was no significant difference in change in wife dominance ($t = .87$, $p > .05$), in combination scores ($t = .43$, $p > .05$), in emergence ($t = .67$, $p > .05$), in reinforcement ($t = .12$, $p > .05$), or in plus scores ($t = .13$, $p > .05$).

Hypothesis V

This hypothesis, concerning the Group Experience Evaluation, was non-specific, making the general prediction that change would be reported by the E group in some of the areas covered by the questionnaire. The ratings for each of the 36 items were averaged across all subjects. Ratings on the first 8 items could range from 1 to 4, while those on the remaining 28 items could range from 1 to 7. Each item with its average rating is shown in Table III, listed in descending order according to mean rating at post-testing. The second figure listed beside each item is the mean rating given that item during follow-up testing. The six items on which the greatest change was reported at post-testing are:

1. General sensitivity to or awareness of your marriage - increase

TABLE III
 MEAN REPORTED DEVIATION FROM "NO CHANGE"
 ON GROUP EXPERIENCE EVALUATION

Post-testing	Follow-up testing	Item
2.8	2.9	General sensitivity to or awareness of your marriage.
2.6	2.7	Awareness of your partner's positive qualities.
2.5	2.6	Awareness of what is positive in your marriage.
2.3	2.8	Awareness of the meanings of your spouse's behavior
1.9	2.0	Awareness of what is lacking in your marriage.
2.1	2.2	Awareness of your own positive qualities.
1.8	2.0	Awareness of your own deficiencies.
1.7	1.5	Feeling of closeness to your partner.
1.7	1.5	Efforts to make your marriage better.
1.5	1.6	Awareness of your partner's deficiencies.
1.4	1.4	Feeling of being loved, valued, appreciated by your partner.
1.3	1.3	Amount of behaviors or activities by which your spouse communicates love.
-1.3*	-1.2*	Tendency to take things for granted in your marriage.
1.3	1.1	Feeling of being understood by your spouse.
1.3	1.5	Feeling of understanding your spouse.
1.3	.7	Frequency of expressing positive feelings to your partner.
1.3	1.0	Strength of your marriage.
1.3	.9	Time spent talking together with your spouse.
1.3	1.2	Emphasis on the positive aspects of your marriage.
1.3	.9	Things which you do to meet your partner's needs.
1.2	1.0	Amount of behaviors or activities by which you communicate your love.
1.2	.8	Ability to cope with problems in your marriage.
1.2	.6	Honesty with your spouse.
1.0	.9	Ability to communicate with your spouse.
.9	.7	Feeling of similarity between you and other couples.
.8	.5	Ability to express your feelings.

cont'd. on next page

Mean Reported Deviation from "No Change" on Group Experience
Evaluation, cont'd.

Post- testing	Follow-up testing	Item
.8	.6	Personal self-confidence.
.7	.9	Time spent with your partner.
-.7*	-.7*	Uncomfortableness while being told positive things about yourself.
.6	.8	Feelings of personal individuality and independence within your marriage.
.6	.7	Feeling of having more in common with your spouse.
.5	.5	Feeling that you do not do enough to communicate your love.
-.2*	.0	Feeling that your spouse does not do enough to communicate love.
.0	.3	Emphasis on problems in your marriage.

* Items which showed a mean decrease rather than increase.

2. Awareness of your partner's positive qualities - increase
3. Awareness of what is positive in your marriage - increase
4. Tendency to take things for granted in your marriage - decrease
5. Feelings of closeness to your partner - increase
6. Efforts to make your marriage better - increase

Post-testing - Follow-Up Testing Comparisons

Only E group subjects were tested during the follow-up testing session. Due to practical considerations, only three of the original five instruments were used: the Personality Trait List, the Marital Roles Scale, and the Group Experience Evaluation.

Hypothesis II - Follow-Up

As no significant increase in "emergence" was shown from previous testing, no significance tests of change were computed for emergence during the follow-up testing. The mean emergence score for the E group during pre-testing was .39, on post-testing, .43, and on follow-up testing, .38.

Hypothesis III - Follow-Up

Since only one of the four comparisons on the positive/negative dimension of the Personality Trait List was significant in previous testing, no significance tests were computed for follow-up testing. The pre, post, and

follow-up means for positive and negative adjectives are illustrated graphically in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4. A slight decrease in the number of positive adjectives does appear in follow-up testing, however, this cannot be interpreted as a decay effect since there was no significant increase in positive adjectives during post-testing. Virtually no change occurs in number of negative adjectives on follow-up testing.

A three-way factorial analysis ($A \times B \times S$ Design, Lindquist) was made comparing E group Marital Roles Scale scores from post-testing and follow-up testing. In this analysis, Factor A represents the testing session (post-testing or follow-up testing), Factor B represents the five sections of the Marital Roles Scale, and Factor C represents the individual subjects. A Main Effects Test of Factor A shows non-significant results ($F_{1.33; 1, 68 \text{ df}}$) indicating that there is no difference between scores due to testing session. Thus, no decay effect is shown. (See Table IV for the summary table of the factorial analysis.)

Hypothesis V - Follow-up

On the Group Experience Evaluation, some interesting differences emerged. In the first eight items which deal with degree of awareness of various things related to the marital experience, there was an even greater reported increase in awareness during follow-up testing

FIGURE III
PERSONALITY TRAIT LIST - POSITIVE ADJECTIVES
E GROUP ONLY

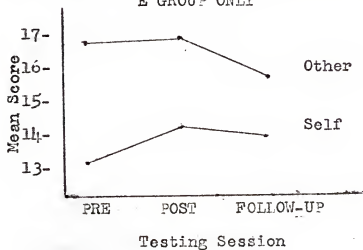


FIGURE IV
PERSONALITY TRAIT LIST - NEGATIVE ADJECTIVES
E GROUP ONLY

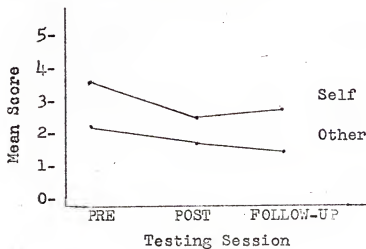


TABLE IV
SUMMARY OF THE FACTORIAL ANALYSIS
OF THE MARITAL ROLES SCALE

Source	df	ss	MS	F
A - Testing session	1	16.13	16.13	1.33
B - Section of MRS	4	244.73	61.18	30.50*
C - Subjects	17	2302.09	135.42	_____
AB	4	15.32	3.83	228
AC	17	197.64	11.71	_____
BC	68	142.33	2.09	_____
ABC	68	943.47	14.26	_____
Total	179	3859.66		

F < .05

than during post-testing. On the remaining 28 items, the predicted decay effect occurred on all but 4 items. A two-tailed t test analysis between these 28 mean ratings during post-testing and follow-up testing showed a significant overall decrease for follow-up testing ($t = 2.51$, $p < .01$). An interesting difference emerges among these items when they are divided into two groups, those which deal with feelings and attitudes, and those which deal with behaviors. (Three items which did not clearly fit in either category were excluded from this analysis.) Between the 15 "feeling items" and the 10 "behavior items," the behavior items showed a significantly greater decay effect ($t = 3.74$, $p < .005$). (See Appendix E for a breakdown of the 25 items into the "feeling" and "behavior" categories.)

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Three of the four major hypotheses of this study were found to be at least partially supported.

Hypothesis I, predicting a greater positive change on the Marital Communication Scale for the E group, was confirmed. Due to the strong emphasis of the MEG upon verbal as well as non-verbal communication between partners, one would expect this hypothesis, more than some of the others, to be supported. The "sharing seat" procedure, the non-verbal communication activities in the last session, as well as the emphasis on the meanings of one's spouse's behavior would be expected to improve communication and sensitize partners to one another.

Delaney and Heiman (1966), who report greater sensitivity to non-verbal communication following T group training, attribute this sensitivity to greater perceptiveness of emotions. This suggests that the stress upon sensitivity to and expression of feelings in the MEG may at least partially account for the increased ability to communicate non-verbally. Schindler-Rainman (1968) writes that in sensitivity training there is less resistance to communicating positive feelings non-verbally than verbally. This same phenomenon has been noted in the MEG. During the

many exercises which require the expression of positive feeling, and particularly during the "sharing seat" procedure, which tends to be very intense, there is a greater reliance upon such non-verbal modes as touch, gesture, facial expression and voice intonation to communicate the intensity of positive feelings. This reliance upon non-verbal modes of communication during the group process may also be a factor leading to more accurate non-verbal communication on the Marital Communication Scale.

It is interesting to note from the results of the Group Experience Evaluation that the reported increase in "ability to communicate with your spouse" was not as great as the reported change for many other items. Items referring to "feelings of closeness," "feelings of being understood," and "general sensitivity to the marriage" were among those showing the greatest reported change. These reported changes seem consistent with Kahn's intention that the Marital Communication Scale measure sensitivity and perceptiveness to subtle, non-verbal cues, rather than formal communication skills.

Further investigation should be done in the future to study the effects of the MEG upon verbal communication patterns. Initially, perhaps a more thorough self-report type inventory concerning verbal communication patterns could be useful. Several items on the Group Experience Evaluation form deal with verbal communication. Of these,

"frequency of expressing positive feelings to your partner," shows the greatest reported change, followed by "time spent talking together with your spouse," "ability to communicate with your spouse," and "ability to express your feelings." The order of these four items in terms of magnitude of reported change suggests that the participants do not feel that their abilities or effectiveness have been increased so much as their efforts toward more frequent communication have been heightened.

Hypothesis II, which predicted greater "emergence" for E group couples was not supported, although there was a slight trend in the predicted direction. A partial explanation for the lack of any significant difference may be the large variance in the number of adjectives checked, both within subjects and between subjects. This variance would tend to offset any differences which might result from the experimental procedure. Furthermore, an adjective checklist such as the Personality Trait List may not be the most appropriate measure of understanding between spouses. The repertoire of descriptive adjectives which one generally uses to characterize persons may be relatively limited. In such an instance, a checklist such as the Personality Trait List would be requiring the person filling it out to re-formulate his conceptions of the spouse along new, relatively unfamiliar dimensions. A better, more revealing measure of understanding between spouses might be one which required one spouse to describe the other

along the dimensions with which he is most familiar, such as behavioral expectancies. For example, a person may not conceptualize his spouse in terms of abstractions such as "inhibited," but he would more likely be aware of a more behavioral description such as a tendency not to relax and "let go" at a social gathering. Perhaps a scale which used such behavioral rather than abstract descriptive items would be more revealing in measuring interpersonal perception.

There are several factors present which suggest that partners should be expected to understand one another better through the MEG experience. First, on the Group Experience Evaluation, reported change of "Feeling of being understood by your spouse" and "Feeling of understanding your spouse" is relatively high, indicating that the group participants feel they have changed in this respect. Secondly, understanding between spouses has been found to be related to other factors such as communication and positive regard. As these factors have been demonstrated to improve, one would also expect understanding between spouses to improve.

Garkuff (1967) reports that empathetic understanding is related to deep positive regard. Dymond (1954) writes that happily married couples are more accurate in predicting their spouse's responses.

On the basis of the factors mentioned above, further investigation seems indicated before discounting the expectation that partners come to understand one another better through participation in the Marital Enrichment Group.

The third hypothesis predicted that the E group would acquire a more favorable view of self and spouse, measured by the Personality Trait List, and a more favorable view of self, spouse and marital relationship, measured by the Marital Roles Scale.

The results from the Personality Trait List are difficult to interpret due to the procedures devised for test administration and scoring. When the test is filled out, there is no limit upon the number of adjectives which may be checked out of the total of 135. Response styles vary widely, with some persons checking as few as ten, while others check virtually each one. Out of the 135 adjectives, 24 are positive and 24 negative. In the analysis of positive and negative adjectives checked, only the absolute number of positive or negative adjectives checked is taken into account. A person with a response style which leads him to check only 20 adjectives out of the possible 135, may check 8 positive adjectives, while another person who checked a total of 100 adjectives may also check 8 positive adjectives. In the former case, 40% of all adjectives checked were positive, while only 8% were positive in the latter case. In interpreting the results, such percentages

or proportions make the absolute number of positive and negative adjectives checked much more meaningful.

The average total number of adjectives checked by all Ss during pre-testing was 40. If positive, negative and neutral adjectives all had an equal chance of being checked, one would expect 18% positive and 18% negative. An inspection of the mean number of positive and negative adjectives used to describe the self and the spouse during pre-testing indicates that approximately 33% of the adjectives used to describe the self are positive, 40% are positive in describing the spouse, 9% are negative in describing the self, and 6% negative in describing the spouse. Thus, the ratio of positive to negative adjectives is approximately 3.5 to 1 in describing the self, and approximately 7 to 1 in describing the spouse. Because the spouse is described, initially, in such relatively glowing terms, it would be expected that more positive change would occur in the description of oneself following participation in the MEG. An examination of the results supports this expectation of more positive change in describing the self. This same trend occurred on the Marital Roles Scale also. In pre-testing, the spouse was described more positively than the self, resulting in greater likelihood for positive change in the description of the self. Increase in satisfaction with one's own qualities and characteristics almost reached significance *

at the .05 level, whereas there was a much smaller increase in satisfaction with one's spouse.

On Clarke's Marital Roles Scale it was predicted that the E group would acquire a more positive overall view of their marriage, as measured by the overall score on the Marital Roles Scale, as well as a more positive view of themselves as spouses, their partners as spouses, and their relationship, measured by the five subscales of the Marital Roles Scale. The prediction of overall change was supported, however, t tests comparing the two groups within the five subscales of the Marital Roles Scale revealed only one difference significant at the .05 level - increased satisfaction with the qualities and characteristics of the marital relationship. This suggests that even though many of the MEG exercises focus on the partners separately, the end result is increased satisfaction with the relationship between the two persons rather than with each other and oneself as individuals. *

A closer examination of the group processes reveals that while many of the exercises seemingly focus upon individuals, the overall focus is upon the marital relationship. This is achieved through the mutuality of the exercises. For example, in the first session of the MEG each husband discusses what he likes about his wife, and then the wife discusses what she likes about her husband. The

cumulative effect becomes "What do we like about us?" ✓

In the MEG group experience, in contrast to other growth group experiences, the couple remains an intact unit. Each person's positive qualities are described only by their spouse, and these are generally qualities which relate to the marriage. Procedures such as Otto's (1962), in which all group members focus upon one member's positive qualities, would be expected to primarily effect one's concepts of individuals. Clarke's procedures, which consistently recognize the couple as an interacting sub-unit of the group, would be expected to affect one's concept of the couple and their relationship.

The procedures implemented in the Marital Enrichment Group to emphasize the relationship between marriage partners bears a good deal of similarity to the process described by Bolton (1961) as "personality meshing." Bolton conceptualizes marriage as the development of a relationship, and describes five different developmental patterns. The developmental process of "personality meshing" bears the closest relationship, among Bolton's five developmental processes, to what is generally felt to characterize a strong marriage. In this process, mutual need satisfaction, empathy, and high positive regard are involved. Each of these factors has been integrated into the MEG procedures. Thus, it is suggested that not only does the MEG process lead to greater satisfaction with

the marital relationship, but also implements procedures which could lead to a more desirable relationship.

Although only one of the five Marital Roles Scale subscales showed a significant difference between groups, all five showed differences in the predicted direction, lending support to the contention that the MEG does positively effect one's view of one's marriage. It is interesting to note that the differences between groups on positive change in satisfaction with the qualities and characteristics of oneself, spouse and relationship were much greater than positive change in satisfaction with the fulfillment of duties and obligations. This difference seems to reflect the emphasis of the MEG upon marriage as an interpersonal relationship rather than marriage as a social institution with fixed behavioral expectations.

Results from the follow-up study indicate that these more positive feelings about one's marriage are relatively long-lasting. This encouraging result increases the hope that the MEG will be an effective preventive approach, with long term positive consequences which might help lessen future problems in the relationship.

The fourth hypothesis predicted that couples in the MEG would become more productive and less defensive as a problem-solving unit, measured by Roman and Bauman's Interaction Testing. The results of the various measures were mixed. However, upon close examination, there are

some indications of improved interaction patterns among E group couples. No significant differences were found among combination, reinforcement and emergence responses. However, these measures, at face value, seem much less closely related as measures of effective problem solving than do dominance patterns and number of superior and inferior joint responses.

Results concerning dominance responses were not as predicted. Husband dominance tended to increase, and wife dominance tended to decrease, although not significantly.¹ This pattern is suggestive of a return to a more traditional conception of marital roles. As was briefly discussed earlier, lack of clearly defined roles tends to lead to adjustment problems in contemporary marriages. Results from this study may indicate that the MEG tends to cause a shift in the "balance of power," with role adjustments still occurring in the marriage. There is also some evidence that this shift is adaptive, in view of the decrease in maladaptive dominance scores which occur in conjunction with the increase in husband dominance.

This suggested increase in husband dominance is congruent with Corsini's findings (1956a, 1956b) that the degree to which the husband is seen (by both spouses) as conforming to stereotyped role expectations is positively correlated to marital happiness. Thus, the increase in

¹ A similar pattern emerged in a previous pilot study.

husband dominance, which is in conformance with stereotyped role expectations, would seem to be related to the increase in marital satisfaction shown on the Marital Roles Scale.

This result of increased husband dominance may be fairly specific to the population drawn from in the present study. The majority of the couples were student couples. A prevalent problem among student couples is the role reversal which often takes place, particularly if the wife is providing financial support for the family unit. This role reversal, or inability for the husband to fulfill his traditional role as head of household and breadwinner, may lead to adjustment problems. A major focus of the MEG is upon the importance of the qualities and characteristics of each partner, rather than upon concrete, behavioral role expectations. This focus may help the partners to de-emphasize the importance of behavioral role expectations, and to achieve a more satisfactory balance in terms of relational factors.

A decrease in maladaptive dominance (dominance resulting in an inferior joint response), as well as a decrease in the number of inferior joint responses, both almost significant at the .05 level, seems to indicate that more effective interaction between marriage partners is taking place. An increase in superior joint responses was not demonstrated. However, this measure would be affected not only by the

interaction patterns of the spouses, but also by the individual I. Q. of each partner, and is, therefore, not a valid measure of more effective interaction between partners.

Although no significant differences were found on many of the different Interaction Testing measures, it can be concluded that there are some indications of improved interaction between partners. This is congruent with Roman and Bauman's findings that better adjusted couples have greater decision making effectiveness. Rausch, Goodrich and Campbell (1963) report similar findings that couples with a closer, more empathetic relationship were found to be more effective as a problem-solving unit.

This improved interaction pattern is most likely the result of the pervasive atmosphere of supportiveness between partners throughout the group process. Mutual supportiveness could be expected to reduce the conflict and dominance struggles between partners. When dominance for its own sake is reduced, each partner's contribution can be weighed more objectively and decision making can proceed in a more effective manner.

The results of the Group Experience Evaluation seem to indicate that attitudes more than behaviors are effected by participation in the MEG. During the group experience, much emphasis is placed upon learning new patterns of communicating positive feelings, behaviors which communicate

love, and behaviors which meet the needs of the other. Reported change scores suggest, however, that the combined effect of these behaviors and activities is a change in attitudes and feelings. The behaviors and activities do not change as greatly, and there is a sharper decline in these changes than there are for changes in feelings and attitudes. Thus, there is indication that while specific behavioral effects of the MEG may deteriorate following the group experience, there is a prolonged change toward greater sensitivity to the marriage.

Summary and Implications for Future Research

In summary, the findings from this study suggest that participation in the MEG promotes more accurate non-verbal communication between partners, more effective problem-solving between partners, and more positive feelings about the marriage. It was not demonstrated that partners developed more congruent perceptions of each other, however, as previously discussed, this may be largely the effect of the particular instrument used in this study. Thus, as a preliminary investigation of some of the effects of the MEG upon married couples, it has been shown that the MEG does effect meaningful changes in the relationship.

There are many directions for future research. First, as an extension of the present study, one might be interested in pursuing the question of greater understanding between spouses, using other instruments. It

would also be meaningful to study the long-term effects of the more objective, behavioral instruments used in this study - the Marital Communication Scale and Interaction Testing. Results from the Group Experience Evaluation suggest that such behavioral changes as measured by these instruments would decline more rapidly than changes in feelings and attitudes as measured by the Marital Roles Scale. It would also be interesting to pursue the question of sex roles brought up by the increase in husband dominance on Interaction Testing to see whether this is a consistent pattern and whether greater husband dominance is related to increased marital satisfaction for one or both partners. Another question which should be studied further is whether feelings and attitudes are changed by the MEG more than specific behaviors such as "behaviors to communicate love," or "communication of positive feelings."

Secondly, there are many areas, not directly related to the present study, which should be explored in the future, such as whether the MEG is more or less effective with normally adjusted couples compared with maladjusted couples. In other words, can this group technique be used as a therapeutic as well as a preventive intervention. Another important issue is whether the effectiveness of the MEG as a preventive approach can be demonstrated over a several year period by comparing the frequency and

degree of the marital problems which develop among the MEG couples as compared with control couples.

At this point, it can be said in conclusion, that the results of the present study offer encouraging findings concerning the effectiveness of the MEG as an experience which improves the quality of the marital experience.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

KAHN'S MARITAL COMMUNICATION SCALE

General Procedure

1) The wife is given the MCS - Wife Communication form to complete and the husband is given the MCS - Husband Communication form to complete.

2) These forms are then returned to the examiner, who circles one of the three communications for each item in a predetermined fashion. The circled communication is the one which the sender then attempts to convey to the receiver during the following communication exercise.

3) The MCS instructions are read aloud to the couple, while they silently read another copy of the instructions.

4) The MCS form is returned to the husband, who communicates to the wife first. (See Marital Communication Scale - Male Statements). The wife is given a copy of the three communications for each particular item following the husband's communication, from which she must choose the message which she believes her husband is trying to convey. Prior to each husband communication the hypothetical situation is described by a tape recording. (See Situations - Female Reception.)

5) Following the husband communication, the roles are reversed. The wife becomes the sender and the husband the receiver. The MCS form is returned to the wife. The situations are described by a tape recording played prior to each communication. (See Situations - Male Reception.) The wife makes her statement. (See Marital Communication - Female Statements), and the husband is given a copy of the three possible messages from which he must choose one.

6) Scoring - The scoring process is simply a matching procedure. The circled message on the husband's MCS form is checked against the message guessed by the wife, and the circled message on the wife's MCS form is checked against the message guessed by the husband. All correct answers are summed to give a total couple score. Scores may range from 0 to 16.

Appendix A, cont'd.

Marital Communication Scale - Husband Communication

Directions - The items of this scale consist of eight hypothetical situations which could require a communication from you to your wife. For each situation, there are three alternative messages which you might wish to convey. For each item, please put a plus mark (+) on the line to the left of the alternative that you would be most likely to let your wife know if the situation were actual, and a minus mark (-) next to the alternative which you would be least likely to let her know. Leave the line next to the remaining alternative blank. Three examples precede the items which you are to answer.

Sample A. Your wife just tried a new kind of tooth paste that you just tried too. You ask her how she likes it.

- ___ a. You had no strong opinion but are curious to find out if she liked it.
- ___ b. You disliked it and want to throw it away if she also did not like it.
- ___ c. You liked it and hope she did too.

Sample B. Your wife had been planning a picnic for a summer weekend day. You are the first to arise that morning and look outside. Your wife asks you about the weather. It is partly cloudy.

- ___ a. You want to hint that you are not in the mood for a picnic.
- ___ b. You want to tease her about not going on the picnic because of the cloudiness.
- ___ c. You believe that it will rain and that you should therefore postpone the picnic.

Sample C. You and your wife have just come from visiting a couple of friends who showed you a new pet dog that they had just acquired. As you travel homeward, you ask your wife about her opinion of the dog.

- ___ a. You did not like the dog and want to ascertain if your wife agrees.
- ___ b. You are just trying to make conversation.
- ___ c. You are interested in your wife's opinion because you liked the dog and want one similar to it in the future.

Appendix A, cont'd.

1. You come to the dinner table as your wife begins to serve chicken, a main course that you recall having had four days ago for dinner too.

- ___ a. You are irritated with her for preparing the same meal again and are warning her that she had better not make the same mistake in the future of a closely repeated meal.
- ___ b. You do not mind but are curious to see if your memory for meals is accurate.
- ___ c. You are elated because chicken is one of your favorites and you are not accustomed to her graciousness of serving it so often for you.

2. Your wife is modeling a new outfit for you that she just bought. She asks you how you like it.

- ___ a. You think that the outfit is pretty, but you are annoyed with her for spending money on a new outfit when she knows you need the money for more important things.
- ___ b. You think that the outfit looks good, are pleased with the purchase, and are pleasantly surprised that she could afford such an expensive looking outfit.
- ___ c. You think that the outfit is totally unbecoming on her and therefore do not think that it is worthwhile.

3. Your wife tells you about the wonderful vacation that one of her friends just took with her husband. She says that she wishes that you and she could also take a trip soon to the same place.

- ___ a. You feel that a trip to that place is unappealing and would hardly be worthwhile.
- ___ b. You want to emphasize to her the extravagance of such a trip and its financial impracticality for you.
- ___ c. You are interested in finding out if she knows the approximate cost of their trip so that you would know if such a trip is feasible for you.

4. You and your wife are discussing a life insurance policy which you recently purchased.

- ___ a. You hope that your wife will remarry if you should die so that her happiness and welfare can be maintained.

Appendix A, cont'd.

___ b. You want your wife to say that she would not consider such a thing as remarriage if you die and would never think of another man but you.

___ c. You are afraid of dying and you want comforting that you will not pass away for many years.

5. You and your wife are both ready for bed at night. It is a night when sexual relations are a possibility.

___ a. You are not interested in having sexual relations that night.

___ b. You are interested in having relations and want to let her know, but you are afraid that she will be unwilling. You hope that your eagerness will convince her to agree.

___ c. You would like to make love only if she would like to and are interested in her attitude.

6. A neighbor phones you and invites you and your wife to visit him and his wife at a get-together at their home on the following Saturday evening. You and your wife had previous plans to go out alone that evening. You tell your neighbor to "Hold on" while you confer with your wife to find out what her attitude will be. You tell her about the invitation.

___ a. You would not enjoy the company of the neighbor and his wife and would rather keep your original date. You want your wife to make the decision mutual.

___ b. You would rather go over to your neighbor's house than keep your original date and you want your wife to agree.

___ c. You have no preference at the moment and will accept whatever alternative your wife selects.

7. Your wife tells you to clean up a mess you made in the apartment.

___ a. You are annoyed and will not clean up the mess because she nagged you.

___ b. You will grudgingly clean up the mess but want to warn her not to try to continue to boss you around.

___ c. You know that you are responsible and will clean up the mess immediately even though you might tease her by pretending you are annoyed at her complaint.

Appendix A, cont'd.

8. As you walk into the bathroom unbuttoning your shirt, you find your wife partly undressed and turning the shower water on. You were on your way to take a shower yourself.

- ___ a. You are glad to find her going into the shower so the two of you can take one together and enjoy the sex play.
- ___ b. You are annoyed and expect her to wait until you take your shower first.
- ___ c. You are just surprised at the coincidence and will let her take her shower first.

Marital Communication Scale - Wife Communication

Direction - The items of this scale consist of eight hypothetical situations which could require a communication from you to your husband. For each situation, there are three alternative messages which you might wish to convey. For each item, please put a plus mark (+) on the line to the left of the alternative that you would be most likely to let your husband know if the situation were actual and a minus mark (-) next to the alternative which you would be least likely to let him know. Leave the line next to the remaining alternative blank. Three examples precede the items you are to answer.

Sample A. Your husband asks how you like a grey suit that he just purchased and is showing to you for the first time.

- ___ a. You don't have any opinions about his clothes, but feel the need to answer him courteously.
- ___ b. You don't like such conservative clothes on him, and you would like to convey this in a subtle way.
- ___ c. You like it.

Sample B. Your husband is watching a movie on television, and you are busy in another room. The TV is loud enough for you to hear. You go into the room where he is and tell him that you can hear the TV.

- ___ a. You would like him to turn it off and come into the other room with you.
- ___ b. You are happy that it is loud enough to permit you to listen to it.

Appendix A, cont'd.

___ c. You would like him to make the TV lower.

Sample C. You are getting dressed to go out and you are not satisfied that the shoes that you just slipped on go well with your dress. You mention your uncertainty to your husband.

___ a. You want him to tell you that you should purchase a more appropriate pair of shoes.

___ b. You want him to suggest a better combination.

___ c. You want him to reassure you that the combination is attractive.

1. It is approximately the time when you and your husband usually go to bed together, but he seems to be engrossed in a TV show to which you have not paid any attention.

___ a. You hope that he will turn off the TV and come to bed with you so that you can make love.

___ b. You are too tired for sex that night and will not mind if he continues to watch his show while you fall asleep.

___ c. You want him to offer to turn on another TV show in which you would also be interested.

2. At a social gathering, an attractive single girl wearing a very daring mini-dress is introduced to you and your husband. She acts very flirtatiously toward your husband and then leaves your company.

___ a. You think that she was vulgar and repulsive and want him to agree.

___ b. You are curious to find out if he has much interest in that type of female.

___ c. You thought that this woman was attractive and you want him to compliment you by saying that you are comparably pretty or prettier than she.

3. Your husband just presented you with your birthday present. You had been hopefully anticipating a completely different gift.

___ a. You want to hint that you are mildly disappointed so that in the future he will try to get you gifts more suited to your wishes.

___ b. You are very disappointed and annoyed that he did not get you what you expected.

Appendix A, cont'd.

___ c. You are pleasantly surprised by the unexpected gift.

4. You and your husband are sitting alone in your living room on a winter evening. You feel cold.

___ a. You wonder if he is also cold or if it is only you who is cold.

___ b. You want him to warm you with physical affection.

___ c. You want him to turn up the heat.

5. You and your husband walk inside your house from outside on a rainy night. You look back and see mud on the floor near the entrance.

___ a. You want him to clean up the mud immediately.

___ b. You want to know if the mud is from your shoes or his.

___ c. You want him to take off his shoes immediately since the mud might be from his shoes.

6. It is time for you and your husband to get dressed for a special event that you were planning to go to that evening. He had purchased your tickets one month in advance for this event. You have a headache and feel uncomfortable.

___ a. You want him to say that he will not mind going alone without you or with one of his friends in your place.

___ b. You want him to volunteer to stay home with you and miss the event.

___ c. You want him to encourage you to go and enjoy the performance despite your headache.

7. You and your husband have begun talking about the purchase of new bedroom furniture. Assume that you currently own a set with a double bed. You had been shopping during the day to see what the local furniture stores had to offer. Your husband comes home in the evening, and you begin to tell him about your findings. You start out by mentioning a twin bed set that you saw.

___ a. You would just be teasing about getting twin beds because you cherish the closeness fostered by a double bed.

Appendix A, cont'd.

- ___ b. You would be serious in bringing up the possibility of twin beds since they would give you some escape from his sexual advances. You are not as eager to be near him as when you were first married.
 - ___ c. You would be interested in the twin bed, but only because of its beauty, not because of any declining sexual interest.
8. You have just come out of the bathroom. It is a few days past when your menstrual period usually begins and you have found no sign of its initiation for the current month. You come up to your husband to tell him about the current situation.
- ___ a. If you are pregnant, you regard it as his fault for not taking better precautions and will be extremely angry at him.
 - ___ b. You are gleeful that you might be pregnant and want to share the good news with him since he also has been wanting you to be pregnant.
 - ___ c. You want him to comfort you by telling you that you have been irregular before and that this slight tardiness is no cause for worry.

MCS Instructions

This experiment involves husband-wife communication in certain typical marital situations. You have each indicated the attitudes which you would most likely and least likely intend to communicate in eight different situations. The attitudes which you are to communicate have been selected on the basis of the choices you made. When it is your turn to communicate, the Communication Scale will be returned to you and the attitudes which you are to attempt to communicate will be indicated by a red circle placed around the identifying letter. For some items, the selected attitudes will correspond to what you marked as most likely, but for other items, you will find that neutral or least likely choices have been designated for you to communicate.

I will determine the actual words which you will say to convey the designated attitudes. For each item, I will hold up a large cue card containing a statement which a wife or a husband might conceivably make in the corresponding hypothetical situation. These statements have been constructed

Appendix A, cont'd.

so that they could be interpreted to mean all three of the alternative attitudes by the receiver. The communicator's job is to make the statements in such a way that the receiver will understand the particular message - that is, the one encircled in red - that has been selected for the communicator to convey. Prior to holding up each cue card, I will play a tape recording which will inform the receiver of the pertinent marital situation. The sender may make his statement as soon as he is ready after the situation is set by the recording.

It is important for you to realize that certain rules must be followed when you communicate. First, the exact words which you are to say will be placed on the cue cards. It is important to say the exact words prescribed for you on these cards with absolutely no additions or deletions. Some individuals feel a tendency to insert their own words or to omit words from the statements on the cards, but it is essential that you resist this tendency. It may help to read each statement to yourself before attempting to communicate it to your partner. Remember to repeat the words exactly as they appear on the cue cards. Also, you must stay seated, and you may not repeat any part of your message after it has been made.

After each statement is completed, the partner receiving the message will be given a list of the three alternatives. He will then place a check to the left of the alternative which he believes his partner was trying to communicate. It is most important for the receiver to realize that the attitudes being communicated will correspond to what the communicator would intend to convey at home only part of the time. In other cases, the message will be different from, perhaps even the opposite of, what the communicator would usually want to communicate in the given situation. Thus, the spouse receiving the message should refrain from basing his understanding on his knowledge of what the partner would usually intend to convey.

The husband will communicate to the wife first. We will start with three sample items for practice. For the sample items only, I will inform you whether the reception was accurate after each communication is completed.

Appendix A, cont'd.

Situations - Male Reception

- A. You ask your wife how she likes a new grey suit that you just brought home and she says . . .
- B. You are watching a movie on television, and your wife is busy in another room. The TV is loud enough to hear. She comes into the room where you are and tells you that she can hear the TV and she says . . .
- C. Your wife is getting dressed to go out and she is not satisfied that the shoes that she just slipped on go well with her dress. She mentions her uncertainty to you and she says . . .
1. It is approximately the time when you and your wife usually go to bed together, but you are seemingly still engrossed in a TV show to which she has not paid any attention and she says . . .
2. At a social gathering, an attractive single girl wearing a very daring mini-dress is introduced to you and your wife. She acts very flirtatiously towards you and then leaves your company and your wife says . . .
3. You have just presented your wife with her birthday present. She had been hopefully anticipating a completely different gift and she says . . .
4. You and your wife are sitting alone in your living room on a winter evening. She feels cold and she says . . .
5. You and your wife walk inside your house on a rainy night. She looks back and sees mud on the floor near the entrance and she says . . .
6. It is time for you and your wife to get dressed for a special event that you were planning to go to that evening. You had purchased your tickets one month in advance for this event. Your wife has a headache and feels somewhat uncomfortable and she says . . .
7. You and your wife have begun talking about the purchase of new bedroom furniture. Assume that you currently own a set with a double bed. Your wife had been shopping during the day to see what the local furniture stores had to offer. You come home in the evening, and she begins to tell you about her findings. She starts out by mentioning a twin bed set that she saw and she says . . .

Appendix A, cont'd.

8. Your wife has just come out of the bathroom. It is a few days past her menstrual period's usual beginning and she has found no signs of its initiation for the current month. She comes up to tell you about the current situation and she says . . .

Situations - Female Reception

A. You and your husband tried a new type of toothpaste, and he asks you how you like it and he says . . .

B. You had been planning a picnic for a summer weekend day. Your husband is the first to arise that morning and looks outside. You ask him about the weather. It is partially cloudy and he says . . .

C. You and your husband have just come from visiting another couple who showed you a new pet dog that they just acquired. As you travel homeward, your husband asks you for your opinion of the dog and he says . . .

1. Your husband comes to the dinner table as you begin to serve chicken, a main course you served four days ago for dinner too, and he says . . .

2. You are modeling for your husband a new outfit that you just bought. You ask him how he likes it and he says . . .

3. You tell your husband about the wonderful vacation that one of your friends just took with her husband. You say that you wish that you and he could also take a trip soon to the same place and he says . . .

4. You and your husband are discussing a life insurance policy which he recently purchased and he says . . .

5. You and your husband are ready for bed at night. It is a night when sexual relations are a possibility and he says . . .

6. A neighbor phones your husband and invites you both to visit him and his wife at a get-together at their home on the following Saturday evening. You and your husband had previous plans to go out alone that evening. He tells the neighbor to "hold on" while he confers with you to find out what your attitude will be. He tells you about the invitation and he says . . .

7. You tell your husband to clean up a mess that he made in the apartment and he says . . .

8. As your husband walks into the bathroom unbuttoning his shirt, he finds you partly undressed and turning the shower water on. He was on his way to take a shower himself and he says . . .

Appendix A, cont'd.

Male Statements

- A. "How did you like that new toothpaste?"
- B. "It doesn't look like a very good day for a picnic."
- C. "What did you think of that dog?"
- 1. "Didn't we have chicken for dinner a few nights ago?"
- 2. "Oh, that's really something. Where did you get the money to buy an outfit like that?"
- 3. "Do you know how much a trip like that costs?"
- 4. "I'm not sure you'll need all this insurance because if I die, you'll probably remarry."
- 5. "Do you really want to have sex tonight?"
- 6. "Do you think we should keep our original plans or go over there?"
- 7. "You're getting pretty demanding these days, aren't you?"
- 8. "Oh, I didn't know you were thinking of a shower. I'm planning to take one myself."

Female Statements

- A. "Oh, it's okay."
- B. "You know, I can hear the TV in there."
- C. "I'm not sure that these shoes look good with this dress."
- 1. "I guess I'm ready for bed. Are you coming with me now?"
- 2. "She really was something, wasn't she?"
- 3. "Oh, you certainly surprised me this time."
- 4. "I'm cold, aren't you?"
- 5. "Is that mud from your shoes?"
- 6. "I've got a bad headache and I don't know if I should go."
- 7. "I went to the furniture store today and saw a pretty set of twin beds. Why don't we consider getting it?"
- 8. "You know, I'm a few days late on my period this month."

APPENDIX B

Personality Trait List

Mark all the traits or characteristics which you think apply to your spouse.* In other words,

"What is he (or she) really like?"

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ☐ Boastful | ☐ Inhibited | ☐ Sensitive |
| ☐ Stupid | ☐ Hearty | ☐ Imaginative |
| ☐ Independent | ☐ Pessimistic | ☐ Meek |
| ☐ Reflective | ☐ Tough | ☐ Conceited |
| ☐ Self-deceiving | ☐ Smug | ☐ Confused |
| | | |
| ☐ Grateful | ☐ Sophisticated | ☐ Polished |
| ☐ Willful | ☐ Modest | ☐ Deliberate |
| ☐ Adaptable | ☐ Intelligent | ☐ Nervous |
| ☐ Thankless | ☐ Silly | ☐ Kindly |
| ☐ Realistic | ☐ Impulsive | ☐ Exhibitionist |
| | | |
| ☐ Hostile | ☐ Friendly | ☐ Short-tempered |
| ☐ Mild | ☐ Inflexible | ☐ Facing life |
| ☐ Headstrong | ☐ Easygoing | ☐ Painstaking |
| ☐ Wise | ☐ Evasive | ☐ Narrow interests |
| ☐ Surly | ☐ Slipshod | ☐ Insecure |
| | | |
| ☐ Practical | ☐ Analytical | ☐ Outgoing |
| ☐ Conscientious | ☐ Tactful | ☐ Witty |
| ☐ Simple | ☐ Antisocial | ☐ Conventional |
| ☐ Self-pitying | ☐ Unhappy | ☐ Fickle |
| ☐ Idealistic | ☐ Unstable | ☐ Phlegmatic |
| | | |
| ☐ Cheerful | ☐ Honest | ☐ Spiteful |
| ☐ Reserved | ☐ Vivacious | ☐ Content |
| ☐ Dishonest | ☐ Natural | ☐ Self-confident |
| ☐ Unexcitable | ☐ Excitable | ☐ Cold |
| ☐ Superstitious | ☐ Quiet | ☐ Flattering |
| | | |
| ☐ Unemotional | ☐ Genial | ☐ Trustful |
| ☐ Energetic | ☐ Self-effacing | ☐ Patient |
| ☐ Aloof | ☐ Suspicious | ☐ Demanding |
| ☐ Affected | ☐ Impatient | ☐ Stable |
| ☐ Good-natured | ☐ Mature | ☐ Spirited |
| | | |
| ☐ Artistic | ☐ Changeable | ☐ Timid |
| ☐ Calm | ☐ Absent-minded | ☐ Sociable |
| ☐ Self-centered | ☐ Adventurous | ☐ Worrying |
| ☐ Self-controlled | ☐ Shy | ☐ Talkative |
| ☐ Alert | ☐ Optimistic | ☐ Logical |

cont'd on next page

* Directions for the second sheet refer to the self -
 "What am I really like?"

Appendix B., cont'd.

- Smart
- Self-critical
- Clever
- Irresponsible
- Frivolous

- Soft-hearted
- Lazy
- Wide interest
- Ungrateful
- Austere

- Stubborn
- Cooperative
- Enthusiastic
- Balanced
- Rigid

- Loyal
- High-strung
- Frank
- Debonair
- Retiring

- Moody
- Inarticulate
- Eloquent
- Quick
- Curious

- Lusty
- Placid
- Forward
- Scared
- Careless

APPENDIX C

Marital Roles Scale

This scale will ask you to list characteristics and qualities of your role as a husband or wife which are of most importance to you. The standard of what is important and necessary is your own attitude: what do you feel is important to being successful in your own marriage?

You will also be asked to note what qualities and traits you feel your partner should possess, what aspects of a marital relationship are important to you, and what marital functions, responsibilities, or duties you feel are important for you and your partner to carry out. Again, there is no external standard of importance. You should list those things which you feel are important to you. Your own set of attitudes is the standard.

Neither is there a list of items to draw from. Please look within yourself for what is important to you. Be as explicit as possible.

Appendix C, cont'd.

What are the qualities, characteristics and traits which you feel are important for you to possess as a husband (wife).

List five which are of most importance to you. Then follow the instructions at the bottom of the page.

- | | | |
|-------|-------|----|
| 1 | 2 | |
| _____ | _____ | 1. |
| _____ | _____ | 2. |
| _____ | _____ | 3. |
| _____ | _____ | 4. |
| _____ | _____ | 5. |

Degree of Satisfaction Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
(Not at all)	(Somewhat)	(Moderately)	(Considerably)	(Completely)				

For each quality, etc., which you listed above, indicate how satisfied you are with the extent to which you manifest that quality, etc., as a husband (wife). Using the Degree of Satisfaction Scale above record your answer for each item in Column 1.

Appendix C, cont'd.

The preceding page is a copy of the first subscale of the Marital Roles Scale. The four other subscales follow the same format of asking for five items, and then rating the items according to the Degree of Satisfaction Scale. The type of item asked for in these subscales are:

What are the qualities, characteristics, and traits which you feel are important for your husband (wife) to possess?

What aspects and qualities of a marital relationship do you feel are most important to have in your relationship with your husband (wife)?

What are the marital functions and responsibilities you feel you should carry out as a husband (wife)?

What are the marital functions and responsibilities you feel your husband (wife) should carry out?

APPENDIX D

Group Experience Evaluation

Indicate the amount of change, if any, in the following areas of your marital experience using the four point scale below.

1. No change 2. Slight change 3. Moderate change
4. Considerable change

- 1. General sensitivity to or awareness of your marriage.
- 2. Awareness of the meanings of your spouse's behavior.
- 3. Awareness of your partner's positive qualities.
- 4. Awareness of your partner's deficiencies.
- 5. Awareness of your own positive qualities.
- 6. Awareness of your own deficiencies.
- 7. Awareness of what is positive in your marriage.
- 8. Awareness of what is lacking in your marriage.

As a result of your experience in the group, you may have experienced an increase or decrease in each of the following areas of marital experience. Please indicate what kind of change, if any, using the following 8 point scale.

- 0 Not relevant to my experience. 1. Considerable decrease
2. Moderate decrease 3. Slight decrease 4. No change
5. Slight increase 6. Moderate increase 7. Considerable increase.

- 1. Ability to communicate with your spouse.
- 2. Amount of behaviors or activities by which you communicate your love.
- 3. Amount of behaviors or activities by which your spouse communicates his (her) love for you.
- 4. Tendency to take things for granted in your marriage.
- 5. Feeling of being understood by your spouse.
- 6. Feeling of understanding your spouse.
- 7. Feeling that you do not do enough to communicate your love.
- 8. Feeling that your spouse does not do enough to communicate his (her) love.
- 9. Frequency of expressing positive feelings to your partner.
- 10. Feeling of closeness to your partner.
- 11. Feeling of personal individuality and independence within your marriage.
- 12. Involvement in your marriage.
- 13. Strength of your marriage.
- 14. Time spent with your partner.
- 15. Feeling of similarity between you and other couples.
- 16. Ability to express your feelings.
- 17. Feeling of being valued, loved, appreciated by your partner.
- 18. Efforts to make your marriage better.
- 19. Time spent talking together with your spouse.
- 20. Personal self-confidence.
- 21. Emphasis on positive aspects of your marriage.
- 22. Emphasis on problems in your marriage.

Appendix D. cont'd.

- 23. Things which you do to meet your partner's needs.
- 24. Things which your partner does to meet your needs.
- 25. Uncomfortableness while being told positive things about yourself.
- 26. Feeling of having more in common with your spouse.
- 27. Ability to cope with problems in your marriage.
- 28. Honesty with your spouse.

APPENDIX E

Group Experience Evaluation

"Feeling Items"

Feeling of being understood by your spouse.
Feeling of understanding your spouse.
Feeling that you do not do enough to communicate your love.
Feeling that your spouse does not do enough to communicate his (her) love.
Feeling of closeness to your partner.
Feeling of personal individuality and independence within your marriage.
Involvement in your marriage.
Strength of your marriage.
Feeling of similarity between you and other couples.
Feeling of being valued, loved, appreciated by your partner.
Personal self-confidence
Emphasis on positive aspects of your marriage.
Emphasis on problems in your marriage.
Uncomfortableness while being told positive things about yourself.
Feeling of having more in common with your spouse.

"Behavior Items"

Ability to communicate with your spouse.
Amount of behaviors or activities by which you communicate your love.
Amount of behaviors or activities by which your spouse communicates his (her) love for you.
Frequency of expressing positive feelings to your partner.
Time spent with your partner.
Ability to express your feelings.
Efforts to make your marriage better.
Time spent talking together with your spouse.
Things which you do to meet your partners needs.
Things which your partner does to meet your needs.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kathleen G. Nadeau was born June 30, 1946 at Miami, Florida. She attended Dupont High School and Bartram School in Jacksonville, Florida, and entered Oxford College of Emory University in 1962 on an early acceptance program. She also attended the Institute for American Universities in Aix-en-Provence, France. In June, 1967, she received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the University of Florida. She received the degree of Master of Arts from the University of Florida in March, 1969. In March, 1971, she received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Florida.

Kathleen G. Nadeau was married to Robert L. Nadeau in August, 1964.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Ben Barger

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Professor of Psychology

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Carl Clarke

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Associate Professor of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Harry A. Gyater, Jr.

Harry A. Gyater, Jr.
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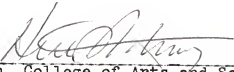
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March, 1971



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